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OUR GUIDE TO **WOOD TYPES**

Wood is one of the most commonly used materials in the world, and almost any type of wood can be used to build furniture. Each type of wood has its own unique characteristics, which in turn can add different degrees of warmth, emphasis and beauty to its surrounding decor.

We've put together this handy guide to help you choose which type of wood is right for your furniture. With our guide we'll give you the low down on some of the most popular wood types available and explain their different characteristics as well as the differences between hard and softwood, grains and colour.

We also clear up any fears you may have over Medium Density Fibreboard, how common it is, and we explain how a veneer can give any piece of furniture that expensive finishing look.



HARDWOOD **VS.** SOFTWOOD

Hardwoods come from broad-leaved trees (deciduous trees that drop their leaves every year and produce seeds) whereas softwoods come from conifer trees (trees that have needles and do not produce seeds).

Hardwood trees are very slow growing trees compared to softwood trees, this tends to make them produce dense wood. Items made from hardwoods are more likely to withstand years of wear and tear. However not all hardwoods are always hard, poplar and basswood are examples of these.

Hard woods are usually much darker in colour and soft woods are usually lighter.

Hardwood is commonly more expensive than softwood, however both are extremely popular within the furniture industry.

Hardwoods	Softwoods
Mahogany	Pine
Walnut	Spruce
Oak	Cedar
Ash	Fir
Birch	Larch
Maple	
Cherry	



OUR **POPULAR** WOOD TYPES



Beech

Beech is a hard, strong and heavy wood. It has a fine, tight grain and even texture. Beech wood is very light in colour and has a high shock resistance. It is a popular choice for furniture and will give your room a warm and inviting feel.

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Oak

Oak is a very popular wood, it is very hard wearing and heavy. It is known for having lovely open wood grain markings. Oak can be purchased in two shades; white oak, which is grey/brown in colour or red oak which is very similar but with a prominent reddish tint.

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Maple

Maple wood is much more durable and heavier. As maple wood is so strong and moisture resistant it is the ideal wood to withstand years of wear and tear. Maple wood is pale in colour and has natural swirls and twists in the wood grain. It can easily accept any type of stain or paint.

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Pine

Pine is very affordable and lightweight with a pale finish which is great for staining. It is less durable wood compared to hard woods such as maple or oak. Pine blends well with other woods, making it ideal if you are looking for furniture that will match existing pieces in your home.

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Ash

Ash is a tough hardwood which is known for its excellent bending abilities. It is primarily used for bent pieces of furniture such as a chair with curved backrests. Ash is light brown in colour with a straight grain.



Mahogany

Mahogany is an expensive hardwood and varies in colour from a medium brown to a deep red brown, depending on its age. It is a very traditional, versatile and popular type of wood. It is also a popular choice for use on veneers.

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Walnut

Walnut is a hardwood and is known for its strength, straight grain and its rich chocolate brown colour, however lighter shades are available. Walnut can be a very versatile wood, offering a range of shades and grains to complement your décor.

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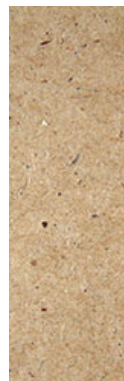
MANUFACTURED VALUE WOOD TYPES



Fibreboard

Fibre board is an inexpensive manufactured wood made from the breaking down of hard or soft woods into fibres which are then bonded together with wax, resin and heat to create a dense piece of wood.

One of the most popular fibre boards is MDF - constructed of medium density fibres that are known for their strength and durability and lend themselves ideally to furniture products.



MDF (Medium Density Fibreboard)

MDF is very strong and is considerably more popular than people think. In fact many will be surprised as to how much MDF furniture is around them.

With its strong/dense structure, your furniture is likely to last a lot longer than you expect, however it's no solid wood, but it's a fraction of the price of solid wood. MDF is extremely popular with Ikea, another leading furniture retailer.

In the majority of cases, furniture built with MDF will have a wooden veneer bonded to it to give it an expensive looking finishing touch.



Particle Board (Chipboard)

Chipboard is a manufactured wood, made from wood chips and shavings that are bonded together with resin.

Chipboard is extremely popular when making furniture, especially Ikea furniture. It is a dense wood and is commonly used with a veneered surface which is used for flat-packed furniture and work surfaces.



Plywood

Plywood is a very strong manufactured wood as it is build-up of layers of wood veneers which are bonded together to create a flat smooth sheet of wood.

It is popular in the furniture and flooring industries due to its inherent strength and resistance to warping due to the bonded cross-ply construction.



Veneer

A veneer refers to a thin layer of wood which is cut from the circumference of a tree. It is then bonded onto a dense piece of wood, which is typically MDF, chipboard or plywood. Veneers are available in many sizes, ranging from 3 to 6mm thick.

Many people mistakenly assume that veneered furniture is cheaper than solid wood; however, veneers quite often are used in high end furniture pieces and it can be more costly than solid wood.

The way to find out if your piece of furniture is veneered is by looking at the edges, and checking if the grain lines run off the top and over the edges of the wood. As a veneer is real wood, it will accept stains and finishes much like solid wood.



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